

Message Text

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47

ACTION ARA-10

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R 142027Z AUG 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 909

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEGUCIGALPA 3542

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: REACTIONS TO PARTY CALLS FOR FREE ELECTIONS

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 3501

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE TRADITIONAL LIBERAL AND NATIONALIST PARTIES HAVE INITIATED AN INTENSIFIED CAMPAIGN CALLING FOR FREE ELECTIONS AND A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONALLY. THIS ACTIVITY HAS BEEN CRITICIZED BY THE DAILY TIEMPO AND BY SOME UNIONS. MINGOV FLORES HAS AGAIN WARNED PARTIES AGAINST PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CAMPAIGN OF THE LIBERAL AND NATIONALIST PARTIES TO BRING ABOUT FREE ELECTIONS AND A RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONALITY (SEE REFTEL) HAS BEEN CRITICIZED BY THE DAILY TIEMPO AS NOTHING MORE THAN "PLAYING POLITICS". AN AUGUST 13 EDITORIAL STATED THAT THE TRADIITIONAL PARTIES UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF RECARDO ZUNIGA AUGUSTINUS (NATIONALIST) AND MODESTO RODAS ALVARADO (LIBERAL) WERE NOT INTERESTED IN SEEKING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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A RETURN TO POWER TO IMPROVE THE LOT OF THE COUNTRY BUT

ONLY TO ACHIEVE POWER FOR THEMSELVES. IT POINTED OUT THAT THE PARTIES WERE NOT PROPOSING MEASURES TO DEAL WITH THE MANY SERIOUS NATIONAL PROBLEMS NOR WERE THEY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEW POLITICAL FORCES WHICH HAD EMERGED ON THE NATIONAL SCENE. THE EDITORIAL STATED THAT THE MAJOR OBSTACLE FOR THE MILITARY IN CONSIDERING THE RESTORATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL RULE WAS THE CONTINUED RIGID CONTROL OF THE PARTIES BY ZUNIGA AND SRODAS.

2. A PAID STATEMENT APPEARED IN THE SAME EDITION OF TIEMPO SIGNED BY 14 UNIONS THAT CRITICIZED THE POLITICAL PARTIES FOR THEIR ACTIVITY AND EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE COUNCIL. 10 OF THE 14 UNIONS NAMED IN THE STATEMENT ARE COMMUNIST-CONTROLLED. THE BASIC THRUST OF THE DECLARATION WAS THAT THE TRADITIONAL PARTIES ARE OPPOSED TO NECESSARY REFORMS AND WERE USING THE CALL FOR A RETURN OF FREE ELECTIONS AS A FACADE TO INSTITUTE A RETROGRADE SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROGRAM ONCE THEY ATTAIN POWER. IN A SUBSEQUENT PRESS INTERVIEW VICTOR ARTILES, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CTH, SAID THAT THE CONFEDERATION HAD NOT TAKEN AN OFFICIAL POSITION ON THE ISSUE. HOWEVER, HE PERSONALLY OPPOSED THE HOLDING OF ELECTIONS IN THE PRESENT CLIMATE OF EMERGENCY, AND QUESTIONED WHETHER A RETURN TO POWER BY THE PARTIES WOULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR THE LABOR MOVEMENT.

3. ON AUGUST 13 MINGOV ALONSO FLORES GUERRA REITERATED A WARNING TO THE PARTIES NOT TO HOLD PUBLIC DEMONSTRATIONS. HE SAID THAT A DECISION TO CARRY OUT SUCH DEMONSTRATIONS WOULD RESULT IN "ACTION THAT WE WOULD ALL LAMENT". HE BASED HIS WARNING ON THE DECEMBER, 1972 GOVERNMENT DECREE THAT FORBIDS POLITICAL PARTY ACTIVITY.

4. COMMENT: AS STATED REFTTEL, THE GOH IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF INTENSIFIED PARTY ACTIVITY DURING THE PRESENT DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES FACING THE COUNTRY. FLORES' REPEATED WARNING TO THE PARTIES IS OBVIOUSLY MEANT TO STOP THEM FROM ATTEMPTING TO HOLD FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IF THE PARTIES PERSIST IN THEIR ACTIVITIES THE GOH MAY WELL REACT AS IT DID

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DURING THE UNCLAND INVASIONS AND HUNGER MARCH, THAT IS, PHYSICALLY IMPEDE OR DISPERSE THE MEETINGS.

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Message Attributes

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